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HENRY CLAY CONNELLY.

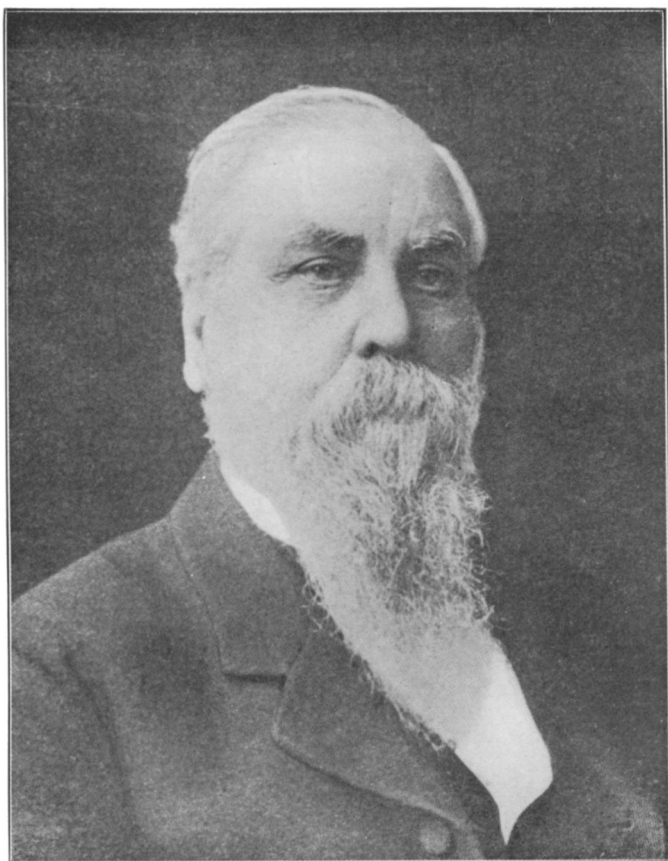
1831-1916.

Henry C. Connelly was born at Petersburg, Pa., December 22, 1831, the son of James Connelly and Marie Hugus Connelly.

Bernard Connelly, the grandfather of H. C. Connelly, was born in County Antrim, Ireland. He came to America about the year 1800 and settled in Philadelphia. His wife was Elizabeth Eggleston, an English woman. She was the first and for several years the only member of the Church of England (called in America the Episcopal church) in Somerset County, Pa. From one side of his family Mr. Connelly is descended from Captain Peter Ankeny and his wife Rosa Bonnet. Captain Ankeny with his command guarded the western frontier of Pennsylvania during the American Revolution. The wife of Peter Ankeny, Rosa Bonnet, was a member of the celebrated French family of Bonnet.

From these ancestors H. C. Connelly derived membership in the Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and served at one time as president of its Rock Island Chapter.

Henry Clay Connelly was educated in the Somerset Academy, and in his youth was employed in the office of the Somerset Visitor as a printer and thus became attracted to journalism and decided upon it as his profession. In 1852, when twenty-one years of age, he became editor of the *Beaver Star* at Beaver, Pa., and continued this work until 1854. In 1855 he came to Rock Island, Illinois, to become the editor of the *Rock Islander* and *Argus*, and filled this position for four years, during which time in addition to his duties as editor he diligently studied law. He was admitted to the bar of Rock Island County, January 23, 1860, and entered at once into the active practice of his profession. The exciting and momentous questions which led to the breaking out of the Civil War engaged his attention. His heart and soul were stirred



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and he in 1862 assisted in the organization of the Fourteenth Illinois Cavalry regiment serving four months as its adjutant during its organization at Peoria, Illinois.

When the regiment was completed he was commissioned a lieutenant, and later captain. He was elected major of this regiment by a vote of the officers of the regiment, being selected for this honor though there were six captains in the regiment whose commissions were of earlier date than his own.

The colonel of the regiment in his recommendation that Captain Connelly's promotion to major be made, referred to the gallant conduct of this officer on the field of battle.

Major Connelly with his troops was present at the capture of the Confederate general, John H. Morgan, in Ohio after his celebrated raid into Indiana and Ohio.

Major Connelly participated in the siege of Knoxville, the capture of Cumberland Gap and in many of the engagements in Eastern Tennessee under General Burnside. On February 2, 1864 he took part in the Cherokee Indian fight near Quallatown, North Carolina. He took part in the Atlanta campaign and was quite near General McPherson when that brave soldier was killed in front of Atlanta.

Late in the year 1864 his command confronted the Confederate Generals Hood and Forrest on the Tennessee River and was with the rear guard from the river to Columbia, Tennessee, and he, with his troops, took an important part in the cavalry engagements on Duck River and in the battles of Franklin and Nashville. When the end of the war closed his long and arduous career as a soldier he returned to his home at Rock Island and resumed the active practice of law. In 1869 he was elected city attorney of Rock Island in which office he served two years. He spent many years in the active practice of his profession and he was connected on one side or the other with many important matters in litigation. He was also active in other business enterprises in the city and county of Rock Island. For several years he was president of the Rock Island board of education. He was one of the incorporators of the street railway company for the line which crosses the island from Rock Island to Davenport. Major Connelly was prominent in the work of the Grand Army of the Republic and

was the first commander of Gen. John Buford post. As has been stated he was for some years president of the Rock Island County Sons of the American Revolution.

On May 12, 1857, Major Connelly was married at Rock Island to Miss Adelaide McCall, the daughter of Clark and Hannah Hanford McCall, of Allegany County, New York. Four children survive Major Connelly, namely; Clark H. and Avin H. Connelly of Kansas City, Missouri, Bernard D. Connelly of Rock Island, and Mabel, wife of Dr. C. W. McGavren of Pasadena, California, with whom Major Connelly resided the last several years of his life.

He died at the home of Mrs. McGavren at Pasadena, December 30, 1916.

Major Connelly was a member of the Illinois State Historical Society and his advice and suggestions were of great assistance and inspiration to the officers of the Society. In 1913, Major Connelly contributed to the Journal of the Historical Society a valuable series of articles on his reminiscences of the Civil War.

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The following editorial article, which was published in a Rock Island newspaper, describes the character of this noble and patriotic man and exemplary citizen and the estimation in which he was held in the community of which he was so long a party.

"Major Henry C. Connelly was one of the most picturesque characters in Rock Island history, notwithstanding his modest and retiring nature. As journalist, soldier and attorney, he played well his part in the life of the community. Of commanding figure and dignified bearing, yet always approachable and cordial, he enjoyed at all times the respect and friendship of those who knew him. He was earnest and God-fearing.

For upwards of half a century he was one of the representative men of the city and his life, in a conspicuous sense, was interwoven with what made for the highest welfare of the city and the State. Distinguished as he was as a citizen, his part as a soldier in the great civil strife won for him upon the field his military rank and title.

“He was almost the last of those really big men of the other days in Rock Island, who were here close to the beginning, who saw the city grow through crucial periods, and whose worth is stamped indelibly upon the pages of history.

“Major Connelly had resided on the Pacific coast for a number of years, but in heart he continued to dwell around the old scenes where the best years of his life had been spent. Rock Island was always dear to him; he loved his old friends here and delighted to recall his early associations.

“Four score years and five were his lot, and his life was worth while. He lived it well.”